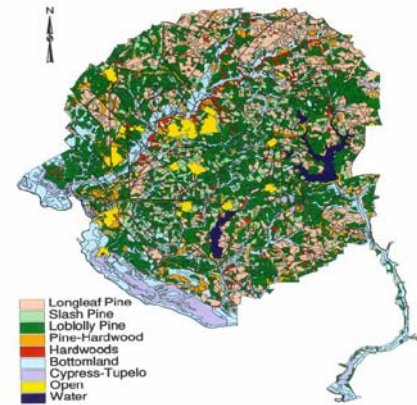




USDA Forest Service-Savannah River Fiscal Year 2005

Operating under an interagency agreement with the United States Department of Energy-Savannah River (DOE-SR), the USDA Forest Service-Savannah River (USFS-SR) manages the natural resources at the Savannah River Site (SRS). In addition to the management, treatment, and disposal of radioactive and non-radioactive wastes, SRS environmental stewardship encompasses the site's extensive natural resources. To support this mission, USFS-SR follows the SRS Strategic Plan goals and objectives to implement the SRS Natural Resource Management Plan.



USFS-SR also follows the 2004 SRS Environmental Management Program Performance Management Plan which describes the strategy to achieve accelerated cleanup and risk reduction. A primary thrust of this Plan is to decommission all Environmental Management-owned facilities and remediate groundwater and contaminated soil by the end of FY 2025.

To this end, USFS-SR continued operations and maintenance at the Mixed Waste Management Facility Plume where approximately 17.8 million gallons of tritiated water were evapotranspired.

As part of SRS environmental stewardship, USFS-SR also

Maintained outreach and education programs to contribute to improve science education and stakeholder involvement.

Outreach efforts reached more than 10,000 individuals in FY05. USFS-SR participated in SRS internal and external planning and communications, including Citizens Advisory Board meetings. USFS-SR also presented mission-related messages through 6 news releases published, the SRS Safety Conference, CSRA conservation education activities, including the CSRA Earth Day, and Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl programs.

We provided education program oversight for 152 student-enrollments in 8 summer courses through the Savannah River Environmental Sciences Field Station. Students were predominately from Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service – Savannah River manages the natural resources at the Savannah River Site under an interagency agreement with the United States Department of Energy-Savannah River under Interagency Agreement N-100-01-000001.
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We also provided oversight of the Natural Resources Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Education Program (NRSMEEP) for third through twelfth grade students and teachers in the Central Savannah River Area. NRSMEEP provided hands-on instruction on- and off-site through 6,617 student-visits and conducted 11 teacher workshops. More than one-half of the participants were ethnic minority students. This program expired on August 31, 2005.

USFS-SR also supported environmental science education in the CSRA and the South Carolina "lowcountry" in partnership with the State Department of Education.

Ensured commitment to National Environmental Research Park (NERP) status by continued maintenance of the DOE Research Set-Aside Program as well as research and evaluation of the effects of human activities on the environment.



USFS-SR promoted SRS as a National Environmental Research Park with 12 presentations at scientific and technical meetings on natural resource research conducted at SRS.

Maintained habitat improvements to meet recovery population objectives for endangered, threatened and sensitive species.

We maintained and improved Red-cockaded woodpecker habitat by removing 189 acres of midstory vegetation and by conducting 1,575 acres of prescribed fire. The habitat now supports 45 groups of the endangered bird, up from one breeding pair in 1985. The final objective for SRS is to have 418 groups.

We conducted surveys of threatened and endangered plants on 167 acres and managed for the endangered smooth purple coneflower by removing competing midstory and sprout vegetation.

Continued to restore native SRS habitats to improve ecosystem health and biodiversity.

USFS-SR ensured biological diversity by monitoring founder plant populations for savanna restoration and planting of an additional 5 acres of wiregrass seedlings.

We reforested a total of 1,078 acres with native longleaf and loblolly pine and improved timber stands and snag habitat (dead standing trees for wildlife) on 1,012 acres. As a by-product of this habitat improvement, USFS-SR cut 66,144 hundred cubic feet of timber.

USFS-SR completed 2,035 acres of watershed maintenance. USFS-SR provided direct and indirect assistance to SRS Soil and Groundwater programs by protecting structures and developments, restoring soil porosity and native vegetation, stabilizing stream channels and mitigating stream bank erosion, and controlling actively eroding areas that potentially pollute streams, wetlands, and other open waters.



Revised the SRS Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) in cooperation with stakeholders.

USFS-SR completed revisions to the SRS Natural Resource Management Plan. This Plan was developed in cooperation with the SRS Citizens Advisory Board and stakeholders. An interdisciplinary team provided operational on-the-ground prescriptions for 12,010 acres consistent with the previous Plan.

Continued to excel in safety and health performance.

USFS-SR conducted a safety and environmental compliance and coordination program within the framework of Forest Service directives, the DOE-SR Integrated Safety Management System, and ISO 14001. This included 1 facility inspection, 20 project inspections, 13 contract prework conferences, and 93 employee/cooperator/contractor orientations.

USFS-SR also removed 330 feral hogs and 28 beavers from the site, removed approximately 200 fallen trees from roads, and conducted deer spotlight surveys that were used in determining appropriate harvest strategies for deer population control.

Maintained infrastructure systems in a safe and environmentally sound state of operational readiness.

USFS-SR maintained a comprehensive wildland fire program with a year-round initial attack capability of dedicated firefighting forces and equipment to protect natural resources and site improvements from wildland fire and smoke either from SRS or from fires that threaten SRS. We limited wildland fires to 11 acres by suppressing 8 wildland fires on SRS.

USFS-SR reduced hazardous fuel on a record 18,074 acres through mechanical and prescribed fire methods.

USFS-SR managed the SRS secondary road and bridge system (except for bridge structural inspections), including inventory, planning, constructing, reconstructing, and maintaining all secondary roads. USFS-SR maintained 819 miles of secondary roads, and constructed 4.5 miles of road for timber harvesting. Using Forest Service standards, USFS-SR maintained 41 miles of multipurpose trails.



USFS-SR managed the SRS exterior boundary by maintaining and protecting monuments and associated infrastructures and by providing surveys and support to DOE-SR on trespass and easement issues. USFS-SR completed four fence crossing projects and 28 miles of site boundary fence maintenance.

Additional Accomplishments

In FY05, USFS-SR won the USDA Forest Service Southern Regional Forester Partnership award for its collaboration with DOE-SR and the National Wild Turkey Federation to host a turkey hunt for mobility-impaired hunters.

USFS-SR extended its interagency agreement with DOE-SR to manage natural resources at SRS through fiscal year 2010.